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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. GLOOMY PROSPECTS FOR MOBUTU

EMBASSY KINSHASA REPORTS THAT WITH THE FALL OF MUTSHATSHA, CONTINUING ZAIRIAN INCOMPETENCE AND POSSIBLE FACTIONAL CONFLICT WITHIN THE ARMY, THE MILITARY SITUATION GROWS EVER WORSE, AND MOBUTU'S CHANCES FOR RETAINING POWER DECLINE. THE EMBASSY SEES THREE OPTIONS FOR THE ZAIRIAN LEADER.

--MOBUTU CAN CONTINUE TO PLACE HIS HOPES ON NIGERIAN DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS AND HOPE EITHER THAT FOREIGN TROOPS WILL BE DISCOVERED AMONG THE INVADERS, OR THAT THE
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KATANGANS WILL REVERT TO THE TRIBALISM AND SEPARATISM OF THE 1960S AND ALIENATE MANY OF THOSE WHO NOW SUPPORT THEM.

--MOBUTU CAN HIRE MERCENARIES. THIS MIGHT STABILIZE THE MILITARY SITUATION BUT WOULD ALIENATE AFRICAN STATES AND COULD LEAD TO CUBAN/ANGOLAN INTERVENTION.

MOBUTU CAN URGE EGYPT AND MOROCCO TO SEND TROOPS, AS THEY HAVE PROMISED, AND PRESS THE SAUDIS FOR IMMEDIATE FINANCIAL AID. THIS APPROACH, ALTHOUGH TOO LATE TO

SAVE KOLWEZI, WOULD BE MORE PALATABLE TO AFRICAN STATES AND WOULD PROVIDE SOME HOPE THAT MOBUTU COULD CLING TO POWER.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT MOBUTU HAS ALREADY DECIDED TO HIRE MERCENARIES, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IN LIGHT OF THE GLOOMY ALTERNATIVES, HE WILL ALSO TRY TO PERSUADE THE EGYPTIANS AND MOROCCANS TO SEND TROOPS. (SECRET) KINSHASA 2811 (EXDIS), 3/28.)

2. MUZOREWA'S PEACE PLAN PROVOKES STRONG NEGATIVE REACTION

REACTION TO MUZOREWA'S MARCH 27 PEACE PLAN HAS BEEN RAPID AND HARSH.

--SMITH SUPPORTED THE REFERENDUM CONCEPT IN PRINCIPLE BUT TERMED THE PROVISION FOR UNIVERSAL PARTICIPATION A "NON-STARTER."

--ZANU LEADER SITHOLE SAID A REFERENDUM UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BE "MEANINGLESS AND IRRELEVANT" AND SHOULD BE DEFERRED UNTIL ZIMBABWE HAD A ONE MAN, ONE VOTE CONSTITUTION.

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--PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADER NKOMO CHARACTERIZED MUZOREWA AS A "HARMLESS HUMPTY-DUMPTY" WHO COULD NEVER RAISE AN ARMY TO OPPOSE BLACK NATIONALISTS. NKOMO ADDED THAT ANY DEAL MUZOREWA MADE WITH SMITH WOULD BE A "SELL OUT." (UNCLASSIFIED) LUSAKA 820, 817 AND 816, 3/28.)

3. BARRE GOVERNMENT RESIGNS

EMBASSY PARIS REPORTS THAT FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD ANNOUNCED ON MARCH 28 THE DISSOLUTION OF THE PRESENT BARRE GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, BARRE WAS ASKED TO REMAIN PRIME MINISTER AND TO FORM A NEW CABINET "FREE OF POLITICAL PARTIES." ACCORDING TO GISCARD, THE PRIMARY GOALS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL BE TO:

--CONTINUE THE PLAN OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY; AND

--FORMULATE A SOCIAL REFORM "ACTION PROGRAM" TO
COUNTER THE COMMON PROGRAM OF THE LEFT.

GISCARD ALSO CONFIRMED THAT LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS WILL NOT
BE HELD BEFORE MARCH 1978.

EMBASSY COMMENT: IN CALLING FOR BARRE TO FORM A NEW GOV-
ERNMENT, GISCARD HAS ATTACHED HIMSELF TO THE COATTAILS OF
HIS POPULAR AND RESPECTED PRIME MINISTER. THE NEW "FREE
OF PARTIES" GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE GISCARD'S THEME OF
REMAINING ABOVE THE POLITICAL BATTLE, THUS ALLOWING HIM TO
SPEAK FOR ALL OF FRANCE. GISCARD'S ACTION IS A MAJOR GAM-
BLE IN THAT IT INSTITUTIONALIZES THE DISAPPEARANCE OF HIS
POLITICAL BASE. IT ALSO LEAVES HIM WITH NO VISIBLE MEANS
OF BUILDING A NEW CONSTITUENCY, EXCEPT INDIRECTLY THROUGH
HIS PRIME MINISTER. WHETHER THE FRENCH WILL ACCEPT GIS-
CARD'S PLAN REMAINS TO BE SEEN. (CONFIDENTIAL) PARIS 9088,
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3/28.)

4. MAKARIOS BECOMING MORE FLEXIBLE

EMBASSY NICOSIA REPORTS IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY CLEAR
THAT ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS MADE A FUNDAMENTAL DECISION AFTER
THE 1976 US ELECTIONS TO TURN AWAY FROM HIS HARDLINE POSI-
TION AND TO SEEK, WITH US HELP, AN AGREEMENT WITH THE TURK-
ISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY ON THE BASIS OF A BIZONAL FEDERATION.
TO DATE THE CHANGES IN HIS POSITION ARE SUBTLE AND GUARDED,
BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT MAKARIOS IS CONSIDERABLY MORE FLEXIBLE
THAN BEFORE. THIS IS EVIDENCED BY A RECENT INTERVIEW IN
WHICH HE:

--ESTIMATED THAT PERHAPS ONLY 10 PERCENT OF THE GREEK
CYPRIOT REFUGEES WOULD WISH TO RETURN TO THE TURKISH
ZONE; AND

--SAID THAT THOSE WHO CHOSE NOT TO RETURN WOULD BE
COMPENSATED.

THE EMBASSY ESTIMATES THAT MAKARIOS IS PREPARING THE GREEK
CYPRIOT COMMUNITY FOR A BIZONAL FEDERATION GUARANTEEING THE
RIGHTS OF FREE SETTLEMENT, FREE MOVEMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF
PROPERTY. (CONFIDENTIAL) NICOSIA 835, 3/28.)

5. DJIBOUTIANS STROKE SAUDIS

EMBASSY JIDDA REPORTS THAT A DELEGATION OF DJIBOUTI LEADERS
VISITED SAUDI ARABIA MARCH 24-25 AFTER ATTENDING THE PARIS
ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE ON DJIBOUTI INDEPENDENCE. ABDULLAH

ARDIA OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE
SOMALI COAST WAS QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS SAYING:

--PRINCE SAUD'S VIEWS CONCERNING POLITICAL STABILITY
IN DJIBOUTI WERE IDENTICAL WITH THOSE OF THE DELEGA-
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TION.

--FRANCE HAD BEEN DRAGGING ITS HEELS ON INDEPENDENCE
UNTIL GISCARD'S VISIT TO RIYADH.

--SAUDI AID HAS BEEN GREATER THAN THAT EXTENDED BY
ANY OTHER COUNTRY.

EMBASSY COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT THE FRENCH ARE NOW IN THE
PROCESS OF DEFTLY SHIFTING A CHUNK OF THE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO AN INDEPENDENT DJIBOUTI ONTO
SAUDI SHOULDERS. THE SAUDIS SEEM PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE
BURDEN. IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF WE COULD NOW TELL THE SAUDIS
WE HAVE NAMED OUR CONSUL GENERAL TO DJIBOUTI AND HOPE TO
HAVE HIM IN PLACE BEFORE THE END OF APRIL. IT MIGHT SPUR
THE SAUDIS TO GET THEIR OWN MAN IN MORE QUICKLY. (CONFI-
DENTIAL) JIDDA 2352, 3/27.)
CHRISTOPHER

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